

Plans to erect cell tower draw protest from Lake Earl residents

April 21, 2024



The Del Norte Planning Commissioner denied a use permit, March 6, to Towers LLC/ Verizon Wireless for a proposed cell phone facility camouflaged as a 136' high pine tree. The proposed site is 2801 Railroad Avenue, located in the undeveloped portion of Railroad Avenue and is owned by the Lesina Family Trust.

The Planning Commission decision to deny the permit is being appealed by Verizon and will be placed on the Board of Supervisors agenda for Tuesday, May 14 at 11:15am.

Those opposing the erection of this tower maintain the tower is unsightly and the faux pine tree camouflage is visible over a radius of many miles, bounded by Boulder and Railroad Avenues to Malone and Alder Roads, Moore Place and Downing Street. Some Neighbors of the planned facility claim the tower poses a threat to the public health. Neighbor property owners contend the tower will deter buyers from the area. Sellers may suffer property devaluation. Opponents of the tower say surrounding natural trees are not permanent but the tower remains on the land permanently. Verizon selected Railroad Ave over four nearby locations, two of which were outside the search perimeter.

In its appeal Verizon states its application is in compliance with the County General Plan and does not contradict the Del Norte County Code. Verizon further contends the proposed facility will not be detrimental to the health, safety, peace, morals, comfort and general welfare of residents or those working in the neighborhood. Ample tree cover surrounding the proposed tower in the immediate vicinity is also planned.

Verizon also contends the denial would violate Federal law protected by the Telecommunications Act.

The proposed tower would fill a significant gap in network service in the Lake Earl area.

The Hearing will take place in Board Chambers in the Flynn Center.